

A True and Perfect Description  
OF  
The Strange and Wonderful  
**ELEPHANT**

Sent from the  
East - Indies .

And brought to *London* on *Tuesday* the Third  
of *August* , 1 6 7 3 .

With a Discourse of the Nature and Qualities of Elephants in General  
*With Allowance.*



Printed for J. Conners at the Black-Raven in *Ducklane*.



# A true and perfect Relation of the Strange and wonderful Elephant sent from the Indies.

**T**hat Mighty Creature called the Elephant, exceeding all other Beasts in the world, both in it's vast proportion of Body, and wonderful Disposition of mind; being so great a stranger in these parts; there having never been but one of them before in England; so that very few Persons now alive amongst us, but such as have Travelled the Eastern world, ever saw one of them, unless upon a Sign-Post in wretched painting; we thought it would be neither unreasonable nor unpleasant, to give our admiring Countrey-men (always greedy of Novelties) a brief Description and Account of the Elephant just now arrived, having had a full view thereof for some time, immediately after it's Landing at White-Fryers.

**T**His young Elephant (for it is yet but a Cubb or Calf) is brought from the East-Indies, being sent from thence as a singular Rarity. And indeed so prodigious a beast is a present worthy of a Prince: To whom 'tis said by the instinct of Nature, or a certain

certain Sympathy of Majesty to bear a profound reverence and regard; they are generally bred in the hot countries, and being very impatient of cold keep only in the East and South; before the *Macedonians* made an incursion into *Asia*, no people of the world except the *Africans* and *Indians* had ever seen them. In *India* they are often nine or ten Cubits high, (that is about fourteen or fifteen foot of our measure) and proportionable in breadth; but this not being yet arrived near his full growth comes short at present of that magnitude, being not above six or seven foot high, and of breadth suitable; whether it will thrive in this uncouth Countrey, so as ever to come to it's just stature may be doubted, it's colour is dunnish or mouse colour, the skin looking peeled and scabby, with very little hair on it, their skin in time becomes so hard that the sharpest sword can hardly pierce it. Their head is very great, and the head of a man may easily enter into their mouth, it's eyes are but small, and like the eyes of a Swine, but very red, it has teeth on either side four, with which it grinds it's meat like Meal; It has also two others which hang forth beyond the residue, and with them they fight, and root up plants and Trees (when they are wild) for their Food.

Of these Elephants teetly comes our Ivory (though some erroneously have thought it to be a Horn) and that you may not too much admire the vast quantity which yearly comes over you are to know, that Elephants every tenth year cast their Teeth, which they industriously hide in the Earth that Men may not find them; but the sagacity of the *Indian* defeats  
old their

their envy, by a device very wonderful, for one would think when the teeth are buried so privately by the Beasts no body knows where, nothing but Witchcraft or digging up whole Countries could discover them, but they onely take Pots or Bottles of Water, and set them up and down in probable places where they suspect Teeth may lye hid; and if a Tooth be near, by a secret attractive power it draws all the water out of the bottle, and so dig and find it, or else remove their Bottle if the water continue in it to another place; some there are that deceive people with bones of Fishes instead of these teeth, but the true is paler and heavier, and being let fall will break.

It has a Trunck called Proboscis, which is a large hollow thing hanging from his Nose like skin to the ground ward. In this young Elephant 'tis not yet above three foot in length, when he feeds it lies open like the skin upon the bill of a Turkey-Cock to draw in his meat and drink, using it for a hand; 'tis crooked, greisly and inflexible at the root next the Nose; It hath two passages, one into his head whereby he breaths, the other into his Mouth whereby he receives his Mear, and so long as he holds up this Trunck when that he is in the Water he cannot be Drown'd.

His Genital parts are like a Horses, but his stones not seen outwardly because they cleave to his reins.

'Tis a vulgar Error that an Elephant has no Joynts, this has Articles or Joynts, which when he please he can use, bend, and move; his Ankles are very low, and he bends his hinder Leggs like a man when he sits, but by reason of his greater weight, he is not able

ble to bend on both sides together : but either lean-  
eth to the Right or left : and after they are grown  
old, they use not to strain them by lying down, but  
take their rest leaning against a Tree (by half-sawing  
which down before to give them a fall, they are  
sometimes said to be taken) his Feet are neer as broad  
as a Bushel, with five distinct Toes cloven but with-  
out Nails, and his Tail like an Oxes, their pace is  
Majestick, and so slow a Child may overtake them :  
They live upon the Fruits of Plants and Roots, and  
with their Trunks (such is their incredible strength)  
overthrow Trees, and eat the Boughs, they also eat  
Earth, dried Figs, Onions, Bull rushes, Palms, and  
Ivy-leaves ; VVhen they are tamed (as this is) they  
will eat Barley, either whole or ground : six or se-  
ven Bushels at a time, and drink (as is said) fourteen  
gallons of water at a draught, yet can forbear drink-  
ing eight days together, and chuses rather muddy  
water then clear, abhorring to see their own Shad-  
dows : but for sweet favours and Flowers, there is no  
creature in the world more delighted with them and  
will gather them themselves if they can get at them,  
and carry them home and stick them about their  
Bins where they ear.

They are Naturally Chast or Continent, taking  
their Venereal Complements, the Male but thrice,  
the Female but twice in all their days ; for which  
purpose they seek out the most obscure places they  
can meet with, and as it is said by our Reverend Au-  
thor, during the Act, they always turn their heads  
towards the East, for which they give some goodly  
small Reasons, as likewise their Religion and Wor-  
ship

shipping the Sun and Moon, all which I have at present no mind to trouble the Reader with: supposing he may have a better stomach to swallow a lye when he meets it in *Aristotle*, *Pliny*, *Ælian*, or *Gesner*, then in a single Sheet Pamphlet.

They are reputed to go with young three years, and bring forth but one at a time, in great pain, leaning on her hinder leggs, her young one is then about the bigness of a Two-yearling, or Steer of Two years old, which she nourisheth six or seven years: as soon as it is Calved, it sees, goes, and sucks, but not with its Trunk, but its mouth, and so grows on by degrees to the Prodigious stature before mentioned.

Their blood is the coldest in the world (and therefore Serpents often set upon them to suck it, when nothing else will cool them) of which is made the ancient Cinnabris (a mixture of that and Dragons blood) that only makes the best representation of Blood in painting.

They are the most docible creatures in the world; *Pliny* says he saw one that had learned the Letters of the Greek Alphabet, others have been taught to Dance, and do a thousand pretty tricks: but the greatest use of them was formerly in War, for which purpose, we read one Emperour kept three thousand, (if my Authour hath not added a Cypher too much: but if he have it signifies nothing) their way was to build a little kind of Castle on his back, and in that he could carry arms and men, who from thence with Bows, Slings, and Darts, would pepper their Enemies: for rushing in amongst the thickest of their Troops, with his horrible voyce (which



is a kind of Dismal Braying) his terrible force and admirable skill, to bite, and bear, and rear, and strike with his Teeth, and his Trunk, and his Feet: his ready obedience to be managed by his Riders, and his strange and seldom seen shape, he often disordered and ruined whole armies.

They are said to be very amorous of handsome women, (whence it appears that he is worse then a Beast that hates them) and to be very Kind and Grateful to their Keepers, insomuch that one upon a time (as the story has it) one of them seeing in his Masters absence a Man Lying with his Mistress, as soon as he came from her, fell upon him and Killed him, I wish every Citizen had one of them for that trick,

They take them in *frick* in great Ditches, or pittingalls, and there tame them by Famine, but the *Indians* have a neater Device: They in such ditches put such meat as they know the Elephants love, who winding of it, to get to it fall in, then comes one and beats him grievously for some time; till another comes and chides him for so doing, and makes him go away, but he returns and falls a beating the Elephant again, whereupon the other likewise comes back and fights with him, and so they do several times, till at the last the Elephant knows him that takes his part, and [the other being gone] will out of gratitude help him out, which they do, by opening certain Doors for that purpose out of the pit, go along with and be led by him as gently as a Lamb.

The *Indians* likewise by great labour and industry

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now have ways to take their Young Ones at their warring places; the common price of an Elephant in those Countries is at least 500 Nobles, and sometimes 1000.

They live very long, Authors say 200. or 300. y. which has appeared by inscriptions found about them; 'Tis certain they have when tame defended to several generations successively (who now a Days plow their ground with them and other work) so it appears they often live an 100 years, and are not counted in their prime or at full growth till they are fifty or sixty years Old; this now come over is but between 5 and 6 years; and therefore being now as big as an Ox or bigger we may imagine if it Live and thrive it will in time grow to a prodigious magnitude.

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**FINIS.**

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